

Date: July 12, 2024

To: All BCEHS Employees/Ambulance Paramedics of BC CUPE Local 873 Members

RE: Paramedic Attack in Victoria and Frontline Safety

This morning one of our own is recovering at home after being attacked last night in Victoria. We recognize there is inherent risk being frontline emergency responders, as we often work in uncontrolled work environments, but no paramedic should be harmed while performing their duties. Last night's incident is concerning and unacceptable.

BCEHS and APBC jointly wish to remind all staff that if it's possible to withdraw from escalating situations, this is entirely supported: you have the right to refuse unsafe work.

The area where this occurred, on the 900 block of Pandora, is known to have challenges. For the time-being to enhance the safety of our staff, no BCEHS paramedics will respond to calls in this area without a police escort.

It is not always possible to assess all risks and dangers, but this event serves as an important reminder to always exercise caution and perform initial and continuous violence risk assessments when attending a call. Maintaining a high degree of awareness and diligence when assessing scenes and patients is best practice.

BCEHS Operations will be conducting a full investigation of the incident with support from the BCEHS Safety Team and APBC Safety Director. In the meantime, a reminder of the resources available to you on violence prevention, high risk hazards, and the right to refuse unsafe work:

- [Violence Prevention and Violence Risk Assessment](#)
- [Right to Refuse Unsafe Work](#)
- [High Risk Hazards Support Guide](#)

Please take care of yourself, and reach out to your unit chief, manager or our CISM program if you need additional support. Your wellness and safety are our top priorities.

Details:

At approximately 7:50 p.m., on Thursday, July 11, paramedics responded to the 900-block of Pandora Avenue in Victoria for medical call. While in the process of providing emergency medical treatment, one paramedic suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

Victoria Fire Department firefighters also on scene offered assistance, allowing paramedics to provide emergency medical treatment for their colleague. Around them, the situation evolved and a significant first-responder effort ensued.

The Victoria Police Department led the coordinated effort, which included additional Victoria Fire Department firefighters, officers from the Saanich Police Department, the Central Saanich Police Service, the Oak Bay Police Department, as well as the West Shore and Sidney North Saanich RCMP, along with additional paramedics.

Our injured paramedic was transported to hospital in stable condition and has since been released.

Our thoughts are with this individual, their crew, their platoon, our dispatchers, and their family and friends. Please respect our colleague's right to privacy at this time.

We would like to thank our first responder and policing partners, and all members of the BCEHS team, for their prompt assistance during this incident.

Sincerely,

Jennie Helmer
A/Chief Ambulance Officer
Chief Operations Officer
BC Emergency Health Services

Jason Jackson
Provincial President
Ambulance Paramedics of BC
CUPE Local 873